Human Concern International

Annual Report 2000

PROPERTY OF
ARIC
Established 1988

20th Anniversary

Working For Your Cause Since 1980

PROPERTY OF ACKU 81377

Mission Statement

Human Concern International (HCI) is a non-profit organization dedicated to help "alleviate human suffering" through sustainable development projects and emergency relief assistance programs that foster self-reliance and preserve human dignity.

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Message from the Chairman

Human Concern International is celebrating its 20th anniversary in this new millennium. As part of its celebration, we thought it would be an excellent idea to document the achievements of the past twenty years and invite HCI's partners and contributors to express their views on the relief and development efforts carried out by our organization.

The need for relief and sustainable development is ever present. The demand for humanitarian aid has been steadily increasing as conflicts and poverty continue to escalate. After emergency relief is provided to a war-torn country, or the one that has been devastated by natural disaster, much more still needs to be done. These countries and their people require massive financial aid for rebuilding, reconstruction, and resettlement. After the floods recede or the sounds of guns are silenced and the hungry stomachs are fed, the real work begins. In addition to providing immediate relief, this is the area where HCI has been focusing its resources over the past twenty years and where it is dedicating its future.

One of the most important elements that helped HCI in our twenty years of steady growth has been the hard work and dedication of volunteers, including my colleagues on the Board of Directors. As a non-profit organization, that works very hard to keep its administrative cost at a minimum, volunteers are the backbone of our organization. We have been very fortunate, over the years, with their quality, motivation and dedication.

The organization's numerous accomplishments, locally and internationally, are mainly due to the work carried out by the staff at HCI headquarters and the regional Directors and their staff in Guyana, Lebanon and Pakistan. They have all, with their experience and dedication, shown that they are able to meet the local and international challenges to deliver services in difficult situations and to implement sustainable development projects. HCI's accomplishments could not have been achieved without the help of our partners and funding agencies. All these people make up the winning team that allowed HCI to thrive in the last twenty years.

Most of all, HCI owes a debt of gratitude to all donors who have supported our work, here in Canada and worldwide, over the past two decades.

Mumtaz Akhtar

PROPERTY OF ARIC

Executive Director's Note

We look back over the past two decades with both humility and pride. Since 1980, Human Concern International (HCI) has continuously widened the span of its operations and gained national and international recognition in the sustainable development and relief arena.

In a world often filled with much agony and despair, it is sometimes hard to believe that any real positive change would be possible. Famine, disease, wars, disasters and civil strife exist all around us, while very little change seems to be imminently forthcoming. However, concerned people are successfully making a difference with the help of HCI.

Still, many heart-wrenching stories abound. Crushing poverty is telling in the majority of countries. Extremely high malnutrition, unemployment, illiteracy, and infant mortality and morbidity rates prevail. These problems require our constant attention.

As we enter this new millennium, we realize that our work will become even more challenging. In response, HCI is committed to dealing with the increased cries for help caused by worldwide conflicts, natural and man-made disasters. We will, as in the past, continue to meet the current and anticipated challenges with integrity, vigor and commitment. Through our committed donors' generous financial support, we know that HCI can continue to make significant changes to the lives of hundreds of thousands of poor and destitute people, the world over.

HCI will continue to build schools and orphanages to educate and house children. We will continue to train adults and teach them necessary skills so that they can efficiently cultivate land, acquire basic trades, learn about sanitation and implement basic health and hygiene practices. We will continue to sustain communities affected by natural and man-made disasters with emergency relief assistance while also assisting in the follow-on rehabilitation, reconstruction and resettlement. Throughout, our theme will be to foster self-reliance and to preserve human dignity.

HCI will also be actively involved in human rights, advocacy and global education. HCI's projects and programs will especially focus on women. Women will play a key role in initiating, managing and operating these projects. All development projects undertaken by HCI will be environmentally friendly.

Additionally, HCI will continue its involvement in local programs and activities, addressing the needs of communities here at home, including refugees and new immigrants, through skill training and professional development programs. These programs will be aimed at promoting self-reliance.

I thank all our donors, volunteers, friends and well-wishers for playing a pivotal role in helping HCI make meaningful changes to many lives and for sharing our commitment and devotion for the good of a common humanity. Together we reaffirm our commitment to the needy. With your continued support and generosity, HCI will continue working for your cause to help "alleviate human suffering".

To commemorate the past 20 years, we have compiled this book of accreditation, which highlights our involvement worldwide, including Canada. I am pleased that so many prominent figures, supporters and organizations have sent their congratulations and support.

Kaleem Akhtar

CANADA

PRIME MINISTER · PREMIER MINISTRE

I am delighted to extend my greetings to all those celebrating the 20th anniversary of Human Concern International.

Our many humanitarian organizations, such as Human Concern International, are testimony of Canadians' generosity of time and spirit. Indeed, it is largely through the efforts of generous people, such as yourselves, that we have been able to build a more compassionate and responsible society in Canada and provide valuable assistance to needy people around the world.

On this important milestone celebration, all the donors, volunteers, staff and officers of Human Concern International may take pride in their commitment to providing emergency relief and promoting sustainable development in many parts of the world. Through your worthy efforts you have been wonderful ambassadors for Canada, demonstrating the Canadian spirit of compassion.

As you embark on your third decade of relief work, I would like to wish you every success in your many projects. I am sure that you will continue to effectively serve humanity well into the 21st century.

Please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable celebration.

Jean Chrétien

OTTAWA
2000

Deputy Prime Minister Vice-premier ministre

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0A6

January 2000

It is with great pleasure that I extend my congratulations to Human Concern International on its 20th Anniversary celebration.

I wish to commend the work of the volunteers and representatives of Human Concern International throughout Canada and overseas who have selflessly given their time and energy to help people worldwide rebuild their lives following conflicts and natural disasters. Your commitment to "alleviate human suffering" is not only touching but also invaluable. It is thanks to the dedication and relief efforts of organizations such as HCI that many individuals and families at home and abroad can enjoy an improved quality of life.

I applaud the contribution of Human Concern International and wish it continued success for the future.

THE HON. HERB GRAY, M.P.

Office of the Prime Minister
and
Minister of Public Works and Communications

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Guyana, South America

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Email: opm@networksgy.com

Our Ref .....
Your Ref .....

2000 March 31st.

Over the past five years Human Concern international through its Guyana operations has intensified its humanitarian efforts in Guyana. Human Concern International has provided vital assistance, particularly in the areas of medical supplies, donations to patients undertaking surgery overseas, orphan sponsorship and meat distribution (zabiha) to deserving Guyanese.

The work of Human Concern International in alleviating human suffering and deprivation is certainly significant and commendable in a world of need. We therefore wish them well and encourage them to continue this noble mission.

On behalf of myself, the government and people of Guyana, I would like to express our sincere appreciation and congratulations to Human Concern International on its 20th Anniversary of active service in the cause of humanity.

Samuel A. Hinds
Prime Minister

Ministry of Health & Labour

Ref. No.

Brickdam, Georgetown
Guyana, South America.

Date:_____

March 30, 2000

The work of Human Concern International (HCI) through its Guyana Operations (HCI Guyana Operations) is most commendable. Since its operation began some five years ago the health sector has continually benefited. Besides distributing useful items to our hospitals and health centers, HCI Guyana Operations has organized doctors, nurses and other health workers to carry out medical outreach programmes in poor communities. Many Guyanese live below the poverty line, therefore, these outreach programmes have been most useful.

The Ministry of Health & Labour congratulates HCI on its 20th Anniversary: we are looking forward to greater cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

.....
Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P.
Minister of Health & Labour

City of Ville d' Ottawa

JIM WATSON

MAYOR MAIRE

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City of Ottawa

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May 15, 2000

Human Concern International
877 Shefford Road
Gloucester, Ontario
K1J 8H9

Ladies and gentlemen :

On behalf of members of City Council and the citizens of Ottawa, it gives me great pleasure to offer you my sincere congratulations on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Human Concern International (HCI).

Since 1980, Human Concern International's (HCI) mission has been to "alleviate human suffering" from worldwide disasters by providing emergency relief and applying self-reliance development projects in crisis areas to maintain human dignity.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the entire staff, volunteers and representatives of Human Concern International (HCI) for their dedication and their diligent efforts. Their contributions have made a difference in the world by "dealing with the cries for help caused by worldwide conflicts, natural and man-made disasters, without concern for race, religion or nationality".

As you are celebrating this twentieth Anniversary of dedicated work, please accept my best wishes for a most celebration.

Sincerely,

Jim Watson
Mayor of Ottawa

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Region of Ottawa-Carleton
Région d'Ottawa-Carleton
Centre Ottawa-Carleton Centre

On behalf of my colleagues on Regional Council and the 750,000 residents of Ottawa-Carleton, it is my pleasure to extend my heartiest congratulations to Human Concern International on the occasion of your 20th anniversary.

Your highly respected and compassionate work, on behalf of people in our region and throughout the world, serves as a role model to individuals and organizations making significant changes in the lives of the less fortunate in our community. Your commitment to relief efforts in areas of conflict and to citizens of Canada is unwavering, especially Eastern Canada during the Ice Storm of 1998.

I congratulate all the volunteers and thousand of canadiens who make the work of HCI possible. I wish you much continued success in all your future endeavors.

Au nom de mes collègues du Conseil régional et des 750 000 résidents d'Ottawa-Carleton, c'est avec grand plaisir que je vous félicite en l'honneur du 20e anniversaire du «Human Concern International».

Votre travail respecté , au nom des persones dans notre région ainsi qu'à travers le monde, sert de modèle aux individus et aux organisations qui voient à améliorer la qualité de vie de ceux, dans notre région, qui sont moins nantis. Votre engagement dans les secours apportés dans les zones internationales de conflits de même que l'aide apportée aux Canadiens est inébranlable, et cela plus particulièrement lors de la tempêtre de verglas de 1998.

Je félicte tous les bénévoles et les milliers de Canadiens qui rendent le travail de «HCI» possible. Je vous souhaite beaucoup de succès dans tous vos projets.

Bob Chiarelli
Regional Chair/president régional

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Claudette Cain
MAYOR MAIRE

Gloucester

May 10, 2000

Kaleem Akhtar
Executive Director
Human Concern International
877 Shefford Road
Gloucester, ON K1J 8H9

Dear Mr. Akhtar

On behalf of the City of Gloucester, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations on the celebration of Human Concern International's 20th anniversary.

Your Canadian charity headquartered in Gloucester has been a lifeline to those harshly affected by both worldwide conflicts, as well as local and national concerns.

From raising money to help Kosovar refugees, assisting earthquake victims in Turkey, and providing regular contributions to the local area food banks, as well as other Canadian enterprises, HCI has proven that they intend to live up to their primary mission and continue to help "alleviate human suffering."

I wish you continued success as Human Concern International continues to play a vital role in our community and throughout the world.

Keep up the exceptional work.

Sincerely,

Claudette Cain
Mayor

The Corporation of the City of Gloucester - La ville de Gloucester

NEAR EAST FOUNDATION
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Tel: (212) 867-0064 • Fax: (212) 867-0169 • E-mail: NearEast95@aol.com

February 2, 2000

Mr. Abdul Majiid Haddad
General Director
Human Concern International-Lebanon
P.O. Box 982
Tripoli, LEBANON

Dear Abdul Majiid:

It is my pleasure to join you and your colleagues in celebrating Human Concern International's (HCI) 20th year of worldwide service. Your friends at the Near East Foundation (NEF) are proud to be associated with HCI's laudable mission to help "alleviate human suffering through the provision of emergency relief and the implementation of sustainable development projects that foster self-reliance and preserve human dignity".

You will remember that our relationship began in 1993 when our mutual friend, Baba Eddine Shanableh, introduced us during a Middle East Working Group Conference in Ottawa, Canada. At that time, NEF's focus on vocational education in Lebanon provided the basis for cooperation on a modest training program in tailoring and knitting. The fine results of this effort lead directly to a very successful joint program of training in "Participatory Rapid Appraisal" for Lebanese NGOs organized by HCI and supported by NEF's Center for Development Services in Cairo.

Based on this cooperation, in 1995 HCI and NEF agreed to become program partners and coordinate their efforts for expanded work in Lebanon. The first fruit of this strategic alliance was training and implementation for a series of community-based credit projects with Lebanese NGOs. In subsequent years, the HCI-NEF partnership has extended to community development and urban rehabilitation in the Tabbaneh section of Tripoli and work with agricultural cooperatives on irrigation in Old Akkar and beekeeping in Beit-al-Fakes.

The HCI-NEF alliance is a sterling example of efficient and cost-effective international cooperation. HCI draws on Canadian support for work in Lebanon implemented in partnership with NEF, a U.S.-based philanthropy, through its Middle East Regional Office in Egypt. The viability of this arrangement depends on identification of common goals, agreements made and kept, frank and open communication, and, above all, trust and confidence among professional colleagues at all levels. On all these scores, HCI has earned, and richly deserves, the highest praise. For us, at NEF, we could not wish for a better partner. We look forward to many more years of cooperation with HCI for the "relief of human suffering" to which both our organizations are dedicated.

All my highest regards.

Chuck Robarts

Richard C. Robarts
President

cc: Roger A. Hardister

FOUNDED IN 1915

SOUTH ASIA PARTNERSHIP
SOCIETE ASIATIQUE DES PARTENAIRES
CANADA

Mr. Kaleem Akhtar
Executive Director
Human Concern International
Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4P2

Dear Mr. Akhtar and Friends at HCI:

On behalf of our members in Canada and our partners overseas, I would like to salute Human Concern International on its 20 years of valuable work for disadvantaged people throughout the world. South Asia Partnership has been proud to have HCI as one of its member organizations and to be associated with some of its development programs overseas.

We see in HCI a real Canadian success story. Your organization is built on the strength of people working together in voluntary effort. You generously support needy people in ways that permits them to build and sometimes re-build their lives. You bring together Canadians from different parts of our own society – a value in itself – in a spirit of outreach to others. You have compiled an admirable record of programs in relief and development. You have joined hands with other organizations for activities to increase tolerance and understanding among people, overseas and in Canada.

HCI's anniversary and the beginning of a new century provide an occasion to renew our commitment to face the challenges and seize the opportunities for human development. We wish Human Concern International and the many people associated with it continued success in its activities for the next score of years.

In appreciation and solidarity,

Richard Harmston
Executive Director

1 Nicholas, Suite 200, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1N 7B7
Tel. (613) 241-1333 Fax (613) 241-1129 E-mail: sap@web.net

MESSAGE TO HUMAN CONCERN INTERNATIONAL

It is with great pleasure that the Philippine Development Assistance Programme (PDAP) has learned that Human Concern International (HCI), is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. Please accept our warmest congratulations on this commendable achievement.

PDAP and HCI have developed a strong partnership over the years. HCI is PDAP's strategic partner in implementing Promoting Participation in Sustainable Enterprises (PPSE), which is a program that seeks to develop private sector capabilities among the rural poor in the Philippines. The PPSE upgrades farm and off-farm enterprises and adopts a sustainable integrated area development strategy to ensure food security and increase farmers' income.

HCI has provided PDAP valuable contributions in supporting poverty alleviation measures in the Philippines, and has likewise assisted Muslim communities and Indigenous Peoples in Mindanao through the coordination of drought assistance.

We at PDAP believe that this partnership will continue to grow and deepen. As both our organizations continue to meet the challenges of development, we look forward to an even stronger relationship and further joint initiatives in the future.

Once again, congratulations to HCI on the celebration of its 20th anniversary.

PDAP
PHILIPPINE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME INC.
PROGRAMME DE DÉVELOPPEMENT ET D'ASSISTANCE AUX PHILIPPINES INC

THE PHILIPPINE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (PDAP)

MARION MACEDA VILLANUEVA
Executive Director
PDAP-Canada

JOSE NOEL OLANO
Executive Director
PDAP-Philippines

NEAR EAST FOUNDATION

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGION

CONGRATULATIONS!

The Near East Foundation would like to join with HCI in celebrating its 20th Anniversary. Working in partnership over the past years with HCI in the Middle East has been a pleasure. The sincerity, heartfelt commitment and ecumenical spirit one feels in joining with these folks in the field, produces both results as well as makes working together a real pleasure. Their contribution to those in need is outstanding.

We look forward to continuing our collaboration with HCI in the new mellennia.

Roger Hardister
Near East Foundation
EMR Regional Director
Cairo
January 15, 2000

CHILDREN OF ISLAMIC NATIONS
#316 - 21 - 10405 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3S2
Tel. (780) 461 0767

Mr. Kaleem Akhtar
Executive Director
Human Concern International (HCI)
P.O. Box 3984, Stn C
Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4P2

August 29, 2000

RE: 20 th. Anniversary of HCI

Dear Mr. Akhtar:

On behalf of the Board of Children of Islamic Nations (COIN), I offer our warmest congratulations to you and all members of your organization for the 20 th. Anniversary of HCI.

COIN is indeed very pleased to have developed active and close collaboration with HCI in several charity projects that have long term objectives of improving the condition of less fortunate children and their communities in the fields of health and education. In addition, we have found HCI to be an excellent resource for world wide emergency relief work in communities affected by natural or man made disasters. We at COIN are looking for increased and closer partnership with HCI in future charity efforts. With best wishes and regards,

Sincerely,

A. A. Khan

Dr. Abdul Aziz Khan
President
COIN

ACBAR اکبر

AGENCY COORDINATING BODY FOR AFGHAN RELIEF

Mr. Kaleem Akhtar
Executive Director
HCI, Canada

29 February 2000

Dear Mr. Kaleem Akhtar

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the work of Human Concern International for Afghans on the occasion of their 20th anniversary.

I have watched the development of HCI since it established its programme in Pakistan in 1984. I was an early visitor to Hope Village in Akora Khattak refugee camps, as well as a frequent visitor to the vocational training centre. These are major services adding a ray of happiness to many men and women, girls and boys for which HCI can take pride.

The HCI programmes address high priority needs for vulnerable widows, women and children. They provide essential services in the education sector which is so crucial for the future well being of this nation depleted by years of turmoil. Attention to the health needs of the refugee population is also an investment in the future, in addition to being a solace for the present.

In extending credit in conjunction with skills training, especially to widows and orphans, HCI contributes to maintaining the dignity of these proud people by enabling them to be self-sufficient, avoiding that state of dependency into which refugees too often fall.

Afghanistan has suffered not only from war, but has also been badly battered by natural disasters, such as several massive earthquakes. The humanitarian response of HCI to these emergencies through the provision of food, shelter, medical supplies, and non-food items was prompt and generous.

On a more permanent level, HCI has engaged in numerous reconstruction projects covering schools, clinics, hospitals, roads, and bridges and flood protection in various areas of Afghanistan.

For all projects, inside Afghanistan and in Pakistan, HCI has extended its cooperation to other assistance players. I have sat with members of HCI in many coordination meetings at ACBAR and can attest to their sustained efforts in this field. HCI stands high in the assistance community.

Congratulations to one and all.

Yours most sincerely,

Nancy Hatch Dupree
Acting Executive Director
Peshawar, Pakistan

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CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE ON THE OCCASION OF HCI'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

I learn with great delight that Human Concern International is celebrating the 20th anniversary of its foundation. On this auspicious occasion, I take this opportunity to congratulate the organization and the people who have made it what it is today. For the past two decades, HCI has generously responded to the development needs of poor communities in developing countries world-wide. During this period of remarkable change, HCI has grown to become a familiar name in the NGO community around the world. It has supported a good number of local NGOs through SAP-Bangladesh. This support has gone a long way in improving the life and living conditions of poor people in this country. We are particularly grateful to HCI for the generous support it has extended to our cluster programs in Madaripur district and the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation program in Sirajgonj. A sincere word of appreciation is in order for Mr. Kaleem Akhtar who was kind to visit the cluster programs after their implementation.

It has indeed been a great privilege to be associated with HCI whose people have always been warm and understanding. On the 20th anniversary of its foundation, I pray and hope that the organization will achieve greater laurels in the years ahead.

Syed Nurul Alam
Executive Director
SAP-Bangladesh

MAP INTERNATIONAL®
CANADA

Health and Hope for a Hurting World
Santé et Espoir pour les souffrants du monde

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Naomi Fitzsimmons
Supervisor, Distribution Centre

Human Concern International
Attn. Kaleem Akhtar
877 Shefford Road
Gloucester, ON K1Y 4P2

Dear Kaleem,

On behalf of MAP International of Canada's Board of Directors, staff and supporters I congratulate Human Concern International for 20 years of conscientious dedication to global humanitarian work. MAP is very proud of a long-standing affiliation that has recently brought much-needed medical aid to the people of Afghanistan, Guyana, Pakistan, and Somalia to name a few. In the future MAP looks forward to a strong and continued partnership with HCI, bringing medical hope to the world's most needy, regardless of race or religion.

With warmest regards,

John P. Kelsall
President, MAP International of Canada

Novatip Consulting Incorporated
921 Raftsman Lane
Orleans, Ontario, Canada, K1C 2V3

We are very proud of our association with *Human Concern International.* Through this, we have had a unique opportunity to objectively view their operations and to work with Board Members; Officers and several Volunteers. We are truly impressed.

HCI has consistently and selflessly fulfilled its mission of helping *"alleviate human suffering"* throughout Canada and the world. It serves as a beacon of hope, compassion and sagacity in many troubled parts of the world. It is also a model for humanitarian care organizations.

As *Human Concern International* enters its twenty-first year, in the twenty-first century of the Common Era, of its service to humanity, we are more than confident that it will meet the challenges of tomorrow with the same generosity, compassion and caring that has made it a world-class NGO.

We congratulate *Human Concern International*, its Board; Officers, Volunteers and generous Donors on its twenty years of dedication in helping people help themselves, and we commend its devoted and benevolent efforts to alleviate the suffering of all needy people.

NIL SINE LABORE

Colonel Michel W Drapeau
President

David J Statham
Chief Executive Officer

Democracy is a system of thought even more than a system of government.
The essence of democracy is openness and accountability not stealth and deception
Access to government information is the master key.

INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR PSYCHOSOCIAL TRAUMA

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-COLUMBIA

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May 12, 2000

Mr. Kaleem Akhtar
Executive Director
Human Concern International
PO Box 3984 Stn C
Ottawa, ON Kl Y4 P2
Canada

RE: 20th Anniversary of HCI

Dear Mr. Kaleem:

The Advisory Board of the University of Missouri International Center for Psychosocial Trauma (UMICPT) would like to congratulate Human Concern International (HCI) on the 20th Anniversary of its foundation. The HCI is well known for its projects to provide emergency relief to man made and natural disaster stricken areas. It has also implemented multitude of sustainable development projects world wide to support self reliance and promote human dignity. We applaud HCI's Board of Trustees and the executive staff for their dedication and hard work.

The UMICPT is specially grateful to HCI for its support and collaboration of projects to relieve psychosocial trauma in war stricken areas of the world. Since 1994 HCI has provided much needed funds to support training of teachers and mental health professionals in trauma psychology in Bosnia, Chechneya, Kosova and Pakistan. These trained personnel in turn brought about psychosocial relief to thousands of war traumatized children. HCI for several years has also provided funds which have enabled UMICPT to bring teachers and mental health professionals from various waring countries to UMC campus for more intensive training as "trainers" in trauma psychology. These individuals returned to their countries to train more local teachers to work with traumatized children.

Recently HCI has become a partner with UMICPT in establishing a Counseling Center in Gjakova Kosova. This Counseling Center serves as a resource center for local school teachers who work with traumatized children and adolescents. It also provides direct services to more seriously traumatized children and their families.

We at the University of Missouri are very proud of our association with HCI and greatly value our partnership. We wish HCI and its staff success in future and look forward to our continued collaboration in many years to come.

With best wishes,

Joseph Lamberti

Joseph Lamberti, M.D.
Professor Emeritus
University of Missouri International Center
for Psychosocial Trauma

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL & EDUCATIONAL TRUST (IMET)

May 12, 2000

*Ref :*_____

*Date :*_____

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Mr. Kaleem Akhtar
Executive Director
Human Concern International (HCI)
PO Box 3984 Stn C
Ottawa, ON Kl Y4 P2
Canada

Dear Mr. Kaleem:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the International Medical and Educational Trust (IMET) of Pakistan, I am delighted to extend our heartiest congratulations on the eve of the HCI's 20th anniversary of its founding.

HCI undoubtedly is one of the most highly regarded humanitarian organizations with a long list of accomplishments in the relief of human sufferings and in promoting the welfare of people in distress around the world.

Our own organization - IMET has been the beneficiary of the funding and tactical support provided by HCI in launching several projects. The most notable of these is the construction of IMET Child and Family Health clinic in Karachi for the indigent population. HCI provided funds which enabled IMET to buy land to build this clinic. The partnership of HCI and IMET through this clinic will serve the medical needs of thousands of underserved people of Karachi.

We at IMET value greatly our association with HCI and wish it a continued success.

Sincerely,

Syed Arshad Husain, M.D.
President
International Medical and
Educational Trust (IMET)

SAH:mkl

A-330; Block - 8; K.A.E.C.H.S.; Karachi-75350; Pakistan.
Mailing Address: P.O. Box No. 12413; Karachi-75500; Pakistan.

SUROVI IS A FAITH

SUROVI
House-16, Road-5
Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1205
Bangladesh
Phone : 509655, 9661468

Message of Felicitations

February 7,2000.

It gives me immense pleasure to know that Human Concern International (HCI)'s has successfully completed 20 years of dedicated service for the welfare of the poor and destitute all over the world. On this auspicious occasion of 20th anniversary, I am deeply honored and glad in extending my heartiest congratulations and thanks to all associated with HCI. I also take this opportunity to recall with gratitude the valuable assistance SUROVI has received from HCI over the past few years.

SUROVI was established on 1st February 1979 to enlighten the lives of destitute children with the light of knowledge, love and affection and to instill in their minds the dream to become responsible and worthy citizens of the great nation Bangladesh. During the last 20 years, SUROVI has enlightened the lives of almost 4 lac neglected children in different districts of Bangladesh. SUROVI intends to expand its activities in every district of Bangladesh by the end of the year 2002 so that no child is left uncared for & destitute in any corner of this dear motherland Bangladesh.

I wish HCI continued success and more laurels and am looking forward to fruitful cooperation between SUROVI and HCI in future.

With best wishes.

সৈয়দা ইকবাল মান্দ বানু

Syeda Iqbal Mand Banu
Founder
SUROVI
Bangladesh.

MERCY INTERNATIONAL-USA
44450 PINETREE DR., STE 201
PLYMOUTH, MICHIGAN
48170-3869
USA

February 9, 2000

Mr. Kaleem Akhtar
Executive Director
Human Concern International
P. O. Box 3984 Station C
Ottawa, ON K1Y 4P2
Canada

Dear Kaleem:

Assalamu Alaikum.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of Mercy International-U.S.A., Inc., I would like to congratulate Human Concern International and you on the organization's twentieth anniversary. During that time, HCI and Mercy have partnered together to assist refugees and other vulnerable people from Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kashmir, Pakistan, Somalia, Rwanda and most recently in Kosovo and Turkey.

Our partnership has eased the pain and suffering of tens of thousands and provided them with a new hope for a brighter future. May HCI's next twenty years be even more successful than the first twenty.

Best wishes always,

Umar al-Qadi

Umar al-Qadi
President & CEO

PHONE: (734) 454-0011 • FAX: (734) 454-0303

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www.islamic-relief.org.uk

21st March 2000

Human Concern International
P O Box 3984
Station C
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada
K1Y 4P2

Dear HCI

Islamic Relief would like to offer its warmest congratulations to Human Concern International on this important occasion of your 20th anniversary.

Islamic Relief having worked with you in the past in different parts of the world we can speak with first-hand experience of your excellent charitable work. Your commitment in helping those who find themselves to be the innocent victims of conflicts and man-made disasters is admirable and an inspiration to others.

From all the staff at Islamic Relief we wish you a happy 20th anniversary and hope and pray that you will continue your excellent work for many more years to come.

Yours truly,

Dr Hany EL Banna
Managing Director
Islamic Relief

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North /TRIPOLI / LEBANON
Reg No. 108/A.D

منتدى المعاقين في لبنان الشمالي
طرابلس / لبنان
علم و خبر ١٠٨/أ.د

It was a big pleasure to me to have the opportunity to write about Human Concern International in its 20th anniversary. HCI is one of the early international organizations that has believed in our work and supported our programs and objectives. Our cooperation together started in the late eighties. Since then, we were always able to communicate and work together in an open and honest manner. HCI has proved without any doubt that its work is free from all kind of bias or discrimination whether it is religious, gender base, racial or ethnic. In all the programs that we developed together, HCI was only concerned that these programs are serving disabled people and are helping the cause of disability. I believe that this is the kind of social approach that ought to be adopted by all NGOs if our objective is to work for a better and humane world.

Nawaf kabbara
President of the board of trustees of
The Forum of Handicapped in North Lebanon

العنوان : طرابلس الميناء ــ أول شارع بورسعيد ــ خلف محطة قطان للمحروقات . ص.ب: ٦٧٠ طرابلس
Address : TRIPOLI – MINA – POR SAID STREET – BEHIND KATAN STATION –P.BOX.670 TRIPOLI
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Human Concern International

When I was first approached to join Human Concern International (HCI) Guyana Operations, I was indeed elated. It was always my dream to work for the welfare of the people. This was my opportunity to fulfill my dream. For me this was indeed a tremendous challenge, since I was expected to do much more than just sit in an office.

Humanitarian work, especially that which is carried out by HCI Guyana, involves mostly field work such as meeting people, listening to their problems and trying to find solutions to their difficult situations. In fact, it is only when one becomes involved with people and their problems, in a very personal way, can one be made fully conscious of their plight and can feel the urgent desire to do something to improve their situation. Certainly, through personal interaction with people, one also becomes very responsive to the needs of the hundreds of people that depend on the help and support of others.

HCI Guyana was established in 1995, after a visit by the past chairperson of HCI who was a delegate at a local biennial convention. He saw the urgent need to establish a branch of HCI in Guyana in order to alleviate some of the suffering arising from abject poverty in the country. He felt that HCI could make a significant contribution towards the upliftment of humanity. Subsequently, HCI Guyana has successfully implemented several projects. These include Agriculture, Medical Outreach Programs - several of which were held in the rural areas of Guyana, Medical Aid Packages of large quantities to hospitals, clinics, health centers, destitute homes and public institutions throughout Guyana, Child Sponsorship program, Financial and medical assistance to those who need crucial medical attention and assistance, Food and other Special Projects for the poor and needy.

As an officer working in the field, I interacted with many people who have benefited from HCI's assistance, and many who are still very hopeful that HCI would be able to extend much needed help to them. It also gives me the greatest satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment when I personally touch the life of someone in need.

Indeed all credit goes to HCI which allows me to facilitate humanitarian assistance to the most needy people in Guyana. HCI Guyana has gained much respect and recognition due to the high quality of humanitarian services it delivers.

I would like to express my warmest gratitude to the kind people and agencies who have contributed and continue to contribute towards the efforts of HCI. The sustainability and expansion of HCI Guyana Operations certainly needs your increased support. It is indeed our burning desire to take HCI projects to some of the most depressed communities in our country.

Congratulations to HCI from all of us in Guyana. Long live HCI!

Mohamed Safraz Husain
Executive, HCI Guyana

P.O. Box 12202
Georgetown, Guyana
Phone: (02) 70115 Fax: (02) 73283

Human Concern International

Working for HCI Lebanon, for the past seven years, has been an exhilarating learning experience for me. I now realize that every person's contribution is vital for the growth and prosperity of the community.

During the early days of my work, I spent a great deal of my time at the office, as there was so much to learn. Listening to the volunteers from the field, I always dreamt about being more in touch with those to whom HCI was reaching out. I wished to spend time with those who ultimately benefited from HCI's assistance and learn from them how their lives were positively changed.

My first visit to the field was a pleasant surprise and an eye opener. Each visit to the field was a new experience. What I witnessed was a group of happy people and smiling faces surrounding us, sharing their problems, raising their concerns and coming up with solutions through their own conceived dream projects. This was the nature of the community involvement that made us feel closer to each other.

It did not matter to them whether the project or program was funded or not. What was more important to them was our involvement in their concerns and our sharing and caring in their suffering and the support that we had shown. No matter at what stage the project was and what, if any, problems it faced, we always gained the confidence of the local communities. We became part of them, their communities, members of their families and of their daily lives.

Over the past 14 years of our involvement in Lebanon, HCI has established linkages with international organizations in different countries. Variety of activities and programs resulting from these partnerships continue to benefit the poor all over Lebanon.

What is pleasantly surprising to me is that the staff of several community-based organizations had the same feelings regarding the people's reaction towards our combined involvement. The members of these organizations shared these feelings with me time and time again when I was conducting field visits to evaluate our mutual programs and projects.

The very personal bond and strong relationship that has evolved between us at HCI, the community and community based organizations, goes beyond the usual business-like donor-beneficiary relationship. This relationship directly touches people's lives.

We are determined to build more self-reliance and continue to preserve human dignity among the disadvantaged groups. We will continue to do so through our long-term development projects.

The disadvantaged groups have made me realize that even with no proper tools at hand and no availability of resources, the real tools for self-empowerment are the love, care, help and concern that these people show to each other. It is a very strong statement from which we all can learn. I for one have!

Hala Moukaddem
Project Coordinator, HCI Lebanon

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Tripoli, Lebanon
Phone: (06) 433184 Fax: (06) 442076

Human Concern International

It is human nature that one feels inner satisfaction in helping people in need. I myself feel great happiness when I am on some relief or rehabilitation missions delivering assistance, on behalf of HCI. This help gives hope for life to a desperate people. When I tell the victims that this aid is from HCI Canada, they are overwhelmed by emotions that people from as far away as Canada feel their pain and are with them in their time of need. The victim families get encouragement and are enthusiastic to start a new life.

Being part of the relief missions, some of the things I have seen have been very trying on my emotions. I vividly remember witnessing the disastrous consequences when, in 1988, a dreadful earthquake struck northern Afghanistan. I was on a relief and rehabilitation mission in that area. During my visit to a village, virtually destroyed, leaving 95% of its inhabitants dead, I came across an old woman, the only survivor of her family. She was sitting all alone over the ruins of her house, oblivious to her surroundings. She appeared senile. She was wailing and ranting "My husband, sons, daughters, nephews and grandchildren, my whole family, are all buried alive under this rubble". This frail woman had eaten nothing for days. She would simply sit over the remains of her house from morning till night until someone would take her to his or her house. She could not believe that all her loved ones were dead. We sat with her, consoling and comforting her with simple, soothing, caring words of compassion and sympathy. We gave her clothes and food. Suddenly she was taken over by hysteria. And as if the voices of her dead family were calling for her, she took a small shovel and started tearing the earth, in a frenzy and in a futile effort to pull them out from the rubble.

Such sad stories of families torn apart as a result of wars or natural disasters are not uncommon. However, HCI is striving to make a difference. The story of a small boy, named Javed, comes to mind. Three years ago this child was brought from Afghanistan to our Hope Village Complex. His father had died in the internal Afghan war in Laghman four months before his birth. After he was born, his mother also passed away.

Left with no parents, Javed and his four years old brother, Malik Khan, were brought to HCI Hope Village. Javed was three then, suffering from a number of sicknesses. He was severely malnourished, reduced to bones and on the brink of death. An HCI employee was assigned the responsibility, in our hostel at the Hope Village Complex, to take total care of Javed. It was a difficult time for HCI staff tending to such a small, weak and malnourished boy. But the constant attention given to Javed had positive results. After two years with us, this boy is now managing very well. He is going to our school and is very happy in the Hope Village hostel. The entire staff of Hope Village Complex love him. He is receiving the care that HCI provides to many orphan children, including boarding and lodging at its hostel.

In the past twelve years of my association with HCI, many such success stories have surfaced. The hope and happiness that we are able to bring to the needy exudes from their smiles and from their radiant faces, despite their pain and suffering.

We have been present in Pakistan since 1984, providing relief and implementing sustainable development projects in Afghanistan, Azad Kashmir and Pakistan. We will continue these endeavors with increased focus on skill training and micro-enterprise schemes.

HCI has provided me with a tremendous opportunity to play an active role in improving the quality of life for so many people. I am proud to be a part of this noble cause.

Ali Nawaz
Director, HCI Pakistan

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Peshawar, Pakistan
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Memorable Journies
Bangladesh

Faizel Kathrada was in Bangladesh on a business trip and filed the above report with us after his trip. Faizel has been a volunteer with HCI for many years and currently serves on HCI's board as Secretary.

I was going to Bangladesh on a business trip. I casually mentioned it to the staff at HCI headquarters. It was suggested to me that since I will be in Dhaka, I should visit HCI partners and projects there. It was the best thing that could have happened to me. The personal satisfaction that I experienced from being among those who are assisted by HCI, and the hardworking people who are making things happen in the field, was tremendously inspiring.

The trip was exhausting and my stay in Dhaka was short. It was marred with several problems. Days of heavy monsoon driven rains swamped all of Dhaka, paralyzing the normal life. Many areas were flooded with water. Several people died and their properties were destroyed. The poor suffered the most, as their shacks and huts were totally under water, and their meager personal belongings lost.

I was shocked at the desperate situation in Bangladesh. Crushing poverty was prevalent everywhere. Little children clad in dirty clothes begging and scavenging through garbage, working as labourers, cleaning cars and polishing shoes. Little girls and skinny women making bricks, carrying sand and concrete in buckets over their heads, for building and house construction, and the hoards of people on the streets of Dhaka.

When you see mothers holding the limp and almost lifeless bodies of their babies, you wonder what is wrong with us. Why can't we help these people? With all the wealth and resources that are at our disposal, there is no reason for this sort of poverty to exist. It is shameful that people are loosing faith and hope because they feel that no one cares for them.

After attending my business meetings, I managed to spare time to visit HCI's partner — SUROVI. This well known, well-managed organization is located in a beautiful bungalow with trees and flowerbeds. This facility, a personal property of the founder of SUROVI, is being used to operate their programs.

Entering the white gate, I saw the children, sitting on jute mats, in several groups, under the shadow of trees. I learned that each group was a class. An outdoor school equipped with only blackboards and a chair for

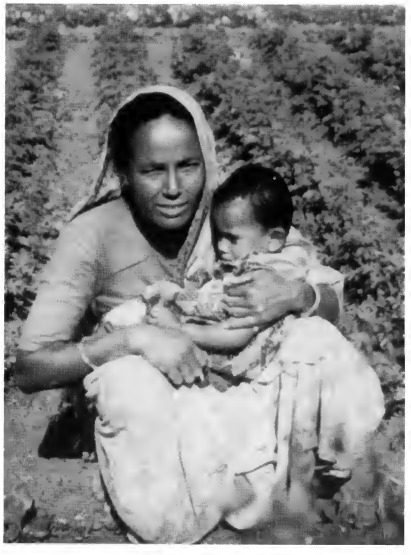
each teacher. The teachers were teaching the children who were wearing bright red uniforms. Smiling, they huddled together, around me.

The financial assistance provided by HCI helps the orphans and poor children. The children are thankful for HCI's care and concern for them. Other than the formal education, these children are assisted with receiving technical skills in local trades. After primary education, many have successfully established their own small shops such as rickshaw and bicycle repair workshops, sewing and knitting, or have been employed in these trades. A few moved on to not only finish high school but get higher education. In order to better run this home based school and upgrade the quality of education and facility, more funding sources must be found.

Other orphans are being helped through SUROVI at their orphanage with school and live-in quarters. It surely is being managed professionally. However, finances are a problem and ongoing financial support is needed. HCI has also been assisting SUROVI with other special programs such as the health and food packages and family assistance.

HCI has also facilitated the implementation of numerous development projects through the intervention of South Asia Partnership (SAP) Bangladesh with funding from SAP-Canada. My meeting with SAP-Bangladesh director was very beneficial. I learned more about SAP's work and about the several projects co-funded by HCI, such as the Madaripur Cluster Long Term Program located in Madaripur near Dhaka, which covers over 16 kilometer radius, involving 30 villages and has assisted 35,000 people.

Had I not visited the field, I would not have known what I now know about HCI's work in Bangladesh. I have learned how difficult it is to try to help people yet not have the financial resources to do it. Certainly, there is a dire need for more development projects and self-sustaining programs in the poverty-stricken Bangladesh, to allow communities to become less dependent on the sporadic outside help.



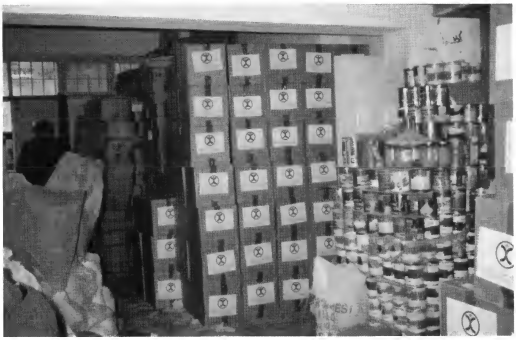
Memorable Journies
Bosnia

Atif Qudrat holds a degree in psychology. He aspires to become a medical doctor. This young man worked hard and saved money to go to Bosnia Herzegovina to make a difference. HCI was happy to co-ordinate his trip and to arrange for his accommodation.

When I departed for "post-war Dayton Bosnia", I was fully prepared to do anything I could to help the country and its people. I was elated and filled with tremendous energy. Nevertheless, one fear lurked in the back of my mind: a stereotype of humanitarian organizations, the amount of work they did and the aid that they actually provided. I was worried that I might end up doing very little humanitarian work.

However,I soon discovered that, for Human Concern International (HCI) and its partner in Bosnia, Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRWW), nothing could be further from the truth. There was ample work for me to do and I had many chances to participate in their projects. Even after I left the place there was much to be done, as both organizations needed extra donations.

To my delight, I began working on my second day in Sarajevo. My first task was building canes and walkers for those injured in the bloody and disgusting war. A small crew of full-time craftsmen worked alongside me; they took great pride in their finished products and would show them to me upon completion. Their true joy, though, came from seeing their pieces on the streets and witnessing the difference they made to many Bosnians. The canes and walkers made many lives more bearable, which gave me the satisfaction I had hoped for, to be making some change for the better in the lives of ordinary citizens by this small effort.



I was next acquainted with HCI's and IRWW's orphan and refugee projects in Sarajevo and Tuzla, perhaps the saddest part of my term. To see children living without parents, in refugee camps or homes set up by two other organizations, it was especially heartbreaking for me, coming from a relatively peaceful country like Canada. I had read extensively on the psychological effects of war on children, and I was serious about helping them.

Still, to witness it all firsthand was extremely hard on me. I saw many of the symptoms I had read about, such as extreme fear and phobias; hostile play and aggression; and hatred and vengeful feelings toward those of other religions or ethnicity. It was almost impossible at times not to feel angry towards countries that consider themselves loving and compassionate, for not preventing this terrible tragedy. However, I had to set aside my political views and concentrate on caring for the children. In trying to lessen their suffering, I trusted my instincts of love and compassion, and loved them as if they were my own brothers and sisters. I found this to be highly effective therapy. After working with dozens of children, I noticed that each one was affected by the war and reacted to it differently, despite the many commonalties. As their therapist, I spent hours talking to as many children as possible about basic human virtues, constantly appealing to their simple reasoning.

While visiting the women's training centre in Tuzla, I was introduced to the headmistress and her colleagues. The centre was originally set up to help women who were raped during the war, but it is now open to all women. This project is very successful, and many women are benefiting from it. The students' and professors' ambition, discipline and dedication to school and work impressed me — attitudes that may be lacking in many of our educational institutions in North America. Overall, the tour was highly informative, but I could not stop experiencing enormous distress, sadness and empathy for the Bosnian women, just as I had for the orphans and refugees.

I also worked in the counselling centre in the neuropsychiatric department in Kosevo Hospital in Sarajevo. The staff allowed me to work as a therapist, because of my bachelor's degree in psychology, my counselling experience and my volunteer experience in hospitals.

The counselling centre offered various services, including individual and group therapy sessions and programs to train teachers as therapists. The patients were predominantly young adult males and young children traumatized by the war and its atrocities. I had

many adult females as patients; most suffered from panic disorders, post-traumatic stress syndrome and various degrees of depression. Many also experienced psychotic symptoms and illnesses.

There is one case I will remember and cherish forever. I love to share it, since it gives me immense pleasure, and inspires me to keep on applying to medical schools. One day, I was with a doctor and a young male patient. The man had had dozens of tests (countless blood tests, electrocardiograms, x-rays), which all showed that he was completely healthy. However, he was unconvinced. The doctor said: "He didn't believe or trust these tests, so he wants to have another CAT scan done. This time he was convinced and complained that he has a brain tumour". I explained that I was no expert but based on what I had read, this man's problem was not physical. All tests were negative; his troubles were probably psychological and possibly a form of panic disorder. The doctor said that she agreed with me. Wow, my very first diagnosis!

Near the end of my session, the patient asked me what I could tell him. I told him that I empathized with him, and expressed my sincere compassion for him in his terrible ordeal. I comforted him by telling him that I was convinced that the doctor who referred him to the clinic had made the right decision. I reassured him that he was now in the best place for help with his problems.

Then I told him a story of my own, which happened just after my mother had passed away from breast cancer. I was convinced at the time that any discomfort, irritation, or new pimple on my skin was some kind of cancer. I told the man that I understood how he felt, when he said that nobody believed that he was suffering or accused him of making it up. My friends and family said the same thing to me, because every other day I would visit doctors and specialists, complaining that I had cancer. Every test indicated that I was perfectly healthy, but I was convinced I was ill despite what the professionals said. As time passed, I

conquered these devastating feelings, and I explained to the man that he would also eventually feel healthy again. I also explained to him that he had many qualified and loving people at the centre to help him, so he should not feel alone in his struggle. When the session was over, the patient thanked the doctor and me for our help and said he was feeling better than he had felt in a long time. He explained that it was mainly because of my story and my positive attitude, compassion, encouragement, reassurance and confidence.

There are no words to describe how wonderfully happy I felt after I heard him say this. I was filled with indescribable happiness, joy, pleasure and gratification. I absolutely want, wish, crave and desire to become a medical doctor one day so that I will be able to help many more people like this young man. In sum, my coming to Bosnia was absolutely worthwhile and successful, because I got to do what I came for, which was to help other people.

I thank everyone I met for their hospitality. I would also like to thank everybody at Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRWW), the staff at the counselling centre and the psychiatric clinic at Kosevo Hospital, all those at Human Concern International (HCI) and everybody else who made this trip a reality and such an incredible success. I attained everything I wished for, and more, and I would do it again in a moment, given the opportunity.

Memorable Journies
Pakistan

Khalid Iqbal serves on HCI's board. While on vacation in Pakistan, he visited HCI's Hope Village Complex. These are his reflections upon returning from his trip.

Our journey to the Northwest Frontier Province started from Islamabad where I was visiting my family on holidays. Travelling on the busy, narrow highway we reached Peshawar for a visit to Hope Village Complex located in Akora Khattak Afghan refugee camps.

On our way to Hope Village, not knowing what we were going to see, I said to my brother's family who was accompanying me that it would be a quick and short visit. This is when our van took a turn on a gravel road going through a dried up river. The rugged, rocky terrain and lack of trees and vegetation indicated severe water shortage. After travelling a few kilometers on the unpaved, bumpy road, we found ourselves in the refugee camps. "Over one lakh (100,000) Afghan refugees are camped here" said the Afghan driver who was driving us to Hope Village Complex. "The conditions are deplorable. There is lack of the very basic necessities of life like water, food, electricity, health centres and educational institutes. The people depend on humanitarian agencies like HCI and others for majority of food supplies like 'atta' (flour) and 'chawal' (rice)", he sighed and continued: "Afghan refugees living here want to go back to their homes but the war still lingers on in Afghanistan. Before it was Russians killing and maiming Afghans and destroying Afghanistan, now it is our own people. I don't know if this war will ever end. Every Afghan has lost some one: husband, father, brother, children, or mother, in this horrible war. May God help us. We have lost so much". I could feel that his voice was getting heavy as he was trying to hold back his tears.

It was a lifetime experience visiting Hope Village Complex which consists of a host of facilities and is managed and operated by HCI. This complex is located in Akora Khattak. Among other projects and programs, HCI operates a school in this complex, which is located almost at the far end of this camp. Our reception at the school was a royal one. I am sure they would have laid red carpet for us if they had one. Everyone we met held up the tradition of hospitality the Afghans are so famous for.

The HCI Peshawar Office Director Ali Nawaz, the school principal Hohammed Hassan, and a couple of other staff members met us. The school is housed in old brick barrack-like building. The vocational training centers (separate for boys and girls), boys hostel and living quarters and lunch room with kitchen are located in separate buildings adjacent to the school. A medical clinic, which provides medical help, mainly to women and children, is located a short distance away.

It was the school children that captured our attention. They range from four years old to teens. The school has over 450 children, half of whom have lost both parents and live at HCI hostel. Despite their plight and suffering, they were smiling, were extremely friendly and respectful. All of them were in school uniforms supplied by HCI. They were well behaved and very disciplined. As we entered each classroom, they all stood up to greet us, out of respect for us. We could tell that the school was running on string budget. Some classrooms had no furniture except a black board and the kids were sitting on floor mats made from jute or straw. The principal told us that the students made all the desks and benches that were used in the classrooms.

The principal also told us that the children are eager to learn both the traditional and formal education in the classroom, as well as receive vocational training in HCI's Vocational Training and Work Production Center. However, due to the budget constraints, school supplies and training materials are often very limited. They desperately need more school supplies, wood for carpentry training workshop, material for carpet making and leather goods. The women section is in need for stitching material for sewing training. In the sewing class for girls, we saw some of these wing machines that are old and need to be replaced. The number of machines is limited and some of the trainees have to wait after hours to get their turn at those machines. HCI is striving to implement projects that provide these people the opportunity to earn a living and become independent of outside help. However, their efforts are hampered due to the lack of funds.

Pakistan

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Both my brother's family and myself were especially attracted to Ahmed. Ahmed was only three years old when he was found among the dead bodies of his parents and other family members. He was buried among these bodies for three days until someone heard his heart-piercing cries. Severely malnourished and barely alive, he was brought to HCI Hope Village Complex.

Today he has no family of his own. His family, now, is other orphan boys and girls who are in similar situation. His parents are the workers and volunteers of HCI's Hope Village Complex, who take extraordinary care of these children. When I touched

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Ahmed to pat on his back, he hugged me for a long time. He stayed beside me and the members of my brother's family as if he was looking for a family to take him and love him.

He, like other young boys and girls, is receiving traditional and formal education. HCI's staff and volunteers run this school. They are doing a superb job of educating and imparting vocational training to these children. 230 of the 450 children live in HCI's hostel. The school needs more books, pens, pencils, furniture and other school supplies. Their other basic needs must also be addressed.

Most of all, these children need love and support which HCI is providing through its Child Sponsorship Program. Many more children need such help. When I left Ahmed and other children in Pakistan, I promised myself to have as many of these children sponsored as possible. I am appealing to all our readers to support these children in their plight by sponsoring them. Thousands of such children in other poor and war-ravaged countries such as Bangladesh, Bosnia, Chechnya, Kashmir, Kosovo, Pakistan and the Horn of Africa are left with nothing. They need to be taken care of. I beg all of you to help them! The greatest gift one could give to these children is proper education and a secure future allowing them to become productive members of society.

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Charity does not decrease wealth

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